

REMARKS

With entry of this amendment, claims 44, 45, 52, 53, 66, and 67 have been cancelled and claims 72-77 have been newly added, thereby resulting in the pendency of claims 42, 43, 46-51, 54-65, and 68-77. Based on the foregoing amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

The claims were objected to because of the omission of claim 51 and the duplicity of claim 52. Accordingly, the first claim 52 has been renumbered as claim 51, and the second claim 52 has been cancelled.

Thus, Applicant believes that the claim objections have been favorably addressed, and such, respectfully request withdrawal of the claim objections.

Claim Rejections-Double Patenting

Claims 42-71 stand rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-31 of U.S. Patent No. 6,638,277. Claims 44, 45, 52, 53, 66, and 67 have been cancelled, thereby rendering the rejections of these claims. As for the remaining claims 42, 43, 46-51, 54-65, and 68-71, Applicant has submitted herewith a Terminal Disclaimer with respect to U.S. Patent 6,638,277, and as such, respectfully request the withdrawal of the double patenting rejections of these claims.

Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 42-44, 46, 47, 49-52, 54, 55, 57-62, 64-66, 68, and 69 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,370,675 ("Edwards"). Claims 44, 52, and 66 have been cancelled, thereby rendering the rejections of these claims moot. As for the remaining claims

42, 43, 46, 47, 49-51, 54, 55, 57-62, 64, 65, 68, and 69, Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection, since Edwards does not disclose each and every element of these claims, as amended.

In particular, independent claims 42, 50, and 64 have been amended to further include the limitations of now cancelled claims 45, 53, and 67 (as well as the limitations of intervening claims 44, 52, and 66), which have not been rejected as being anticipated by Edwards.

Thus, Applicant believes that independent claims 42, 50, and 64, as well as the claims depending therefrom (43, 46, 47, 49, 51, 54, 55, 57-62, 65, 68, and 69), are not anticipated by Edwards, and as such, respectfully requests withdrawal of the §102 rejections of these claims.

Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 42-71 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103, as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,536,267 (“Edwards ‘267”) in view of Edwards. Claims 44, 52, and 66 have been cancelled, thereby rendering the rejections of these claims moot. As for the remaining claims 42, 43, 46, 47, 49-51, 54, 55, 57-62, 64, 65, 68, and 69, Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection, since neither Edwards ‘267 nor Edwards disclose, teach, or suggest the combination of elements required by these claims, as amended.

As stated above, independent claims 42, 50, and 64 have been amended to further include the limitations of now cancelled claims 45, 53, and 67 (as well as the limitations of intervening claims 44, 52, and 66), which have not been rejected as being obvious over the combination of Edwards ‘267 and Edwards.

Thus, Applicant believes that independent claims 42, 50, and 64, as well as the claims depending therefrom (43, 46, 47, 49, 51, 54, 55, 57-62, 65, 68, and 69), are not obvious over the combination of Edwards ‘267 and Edwards, and as such, respectfully requests withdrawal of the §103 rejections of these claims.

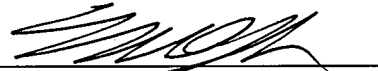
New Claims

Claims 72-77, which find support in the specification at page 8, lines 9-18 of the specification, and are patentable over the cited prior art by virtue of their dependency from independent claims 42, 50, and 63, have been newly added.

Conclusion

Based on the foregoing, it is believed that all claims are now allowable and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions or comments regarding this amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at (714) 830-0600.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael J. Bolan  
Reg. No. 42,339

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Bingham McCutchen LLP  
Three Embarcadero Center, 18th Floor  
San Francisco, California 94111  
Customer No. 23639